

**DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION**

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Contra Costa County Board of  
 Supervisors

Sacramento County Board of  
 Supervisors

San Joaquin County Board of  
 Supervisors

Solano County Board of  
 Supervisors

Yolo County Board of  
 Supervisors

Cities of San Joaquin County

Cities of Contra Costa and  
 Solano Counties

Cities of Sacramento and  
 Yolo Counties

Central Delta Reclamation Districts

North Delta Reclamation Districts

South Delta Reclamation Districts

Business, Transportation and  
 Housing

Department of Food and  
 Agriculture

Natural Resources Agency

State Lands Commission

**DATE:** July 16, 2012

**TO:** Delta Protection Commission Members

**SUBJECT:** Feasibility Study for a Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area

**SUMMARY:** Delta Protection Commission (Commission) staff recently completed the *Feasibility Study for a Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area* (Attachment 1). If accepted by the Commission, then staff will submit it to a Delta Congressional Representative to introduce legislation to establish a Delta National Heritage Area (NHA).

Section 85301 of SBX7-1, charged the Commission with developing:

*“A proposal to protect, enhance, and sustain the unique cultural, historical, recreational, agricultural, and economic values of the Delta as an evolving place....The Commission shall include in the proposal a plan to establish state and federal designation of the Delta as a place of special significance, which may include application for a federal designation of the Delta as a National Heritage Area.”*

**National Park Service review and subsequent changes**

National Park Service (NPS) staff have reviewed the final study for consistency with their interim *National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines*. This review found that the final study addressed and met all ten interim feasibility study criteria, and have provided a letter stating so (Attachment 2).

The NPS letter does contain a few suggestions for the Feasibility Study, and other aspects of Delta NHA development as the process moves forward. The following bullets are the points made by National Park Service in the aforementioned letter, and the italicized comments are Commission staff responses.

- While the theme statements identified in the study are adequate for assessing national importance, consider refining the themes for a broader audience of residents, visitors, and partners. Ideally the theme statements should help residents and visitors understand and appreciate the “Delta as Place” and should inspire work to conserve its heritage values. Further refinement of the themes will prove very helpful for engaging partners in partnership projects that meet the proposed heritage area goals.

*This issue will be discussed with the Technical and Stakeholder Advisory Committees which will commence upon NHA designation, as well as interested members of the general public through the NHA's participatory process. The committees/public can propose refinements to these theme statements for incorporation into the NHA Management Plan which will need to be completed within three years of receiving NHA designation.*

- The figures in Chapter 8 of Delta waterways and levees, key components of the region described in the Study, are illegible. Better illustrations of these important features would support understanding of the unique landscape that exists today.

*The following figures were removed and replaced with more legible figures: Figure 8 – Delta Waterways, Figure 9 – Constructed Waterways, Figure 11 – Water Development Facilities, and Figure 12 – Delta Levees.*

- We suggest revising the statement “No federal strings are attached with NHA designation” (page 127). While national heritage area designation does not result in land use or land acquisition authority, as stated in Chapter 10, receipt of federal funds does come with federal requirements, such as financial accountability and reporting requirements.

*This sentence was changed to: “NHA designation does not come with federal land use or land acquisition authority, though when using federal money there are certain requirements and restrictions.”*

Additionally, a letter of support/partnership commitment from the Yolo County Board of Supervisors, received on July 10, 2012, has been included in document. This letter can be found in Appendix 7 and is referred to on pages 120, 126 and 138.

Finally, the date of the document was changed from June 2012 to July 2012.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Accept the Feasibility Study for a Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area

Attachments

- [1\) Feasibility Study for a Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area](#)
- [2\) National Park Service letter regarding consistency with NHA feasibility study criteria](#)